चष्टा है जोकि बालकों के सभी अधिकारों को ठीक ढंग से सुनिश्चित करा सके। हमें इस बात का भी ध्यान रखना है कि इस में अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्थिति क्या है, अन्य देशों में इस बारे में क्या हो रहा है, हम ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र को क्या वचन दिया है, इन सारे प्रश्नों पर गंभीरता से अध्ययन करने के बाद इस का कानून के तौर पर एक रूप हम लाएंगे। मैं समझता हूं कि सदन इस बात को स्वीकार करेगा कि जो भी कानून बने वह आज की परिस्थिति में हमारे जो अंतर्राष्ट्रीय कमिटमेंट्स, राज्यों की स्थिति और विभिन्न कानूनों को ध्यान में रखते हुए बने क्योंकि अभी अलग-अलग कानूनों में बालक की अवस्था के बारे में अलग-अलग विचार है—कोई 14 साल कहता है, कोई 18 साल और कोई 12 साल कहता है। तो हमें यह भी देखना है कि हमारे कानून की स्थिति अन्य मंत्रालयों और अन्य कानूनों से कहीं कनफ्लिक्ट न हो, उन में कहीं विरोधाभास न हो। इस लिए इस विषय में पूरी गंभीरता से विचार किया जा रहा है।

श्रीमती कमला सिन्हा: सभापति महोदय, मंत्री जी के जवाब से सदन अगर संतुष्ट हो तो दूसरी बात है, लेकिन मैं संतुष्ट नहीं हूं क्योंकि इन्होंने जो जवाब दिया है, यह बिल्कुल टालने वाली बात है। अगर सरकार चाहती है तो इसे करे, नहीं तो फिर इन के पास समय नहीं रहेगा क्योंकि कब तक इन की सरकार रहेगी इस का कोई ठिकाना नहीं है।

डा० मुरली मनोहर जोशी: मैं माननीय सदस्या को इस बात का पूरा आश्वासन दिलाना चाहता हूं कि उन्हें चिंता नहीं करनी चाहिए, यह सरकार अपने कार्यकाल में ही इस आयोग की स्थापना करेगी। हो सकता है उन के पास समय कम हो क्योंकि यहां कुछ समय के बाद सदस्य निवृत्त हो जाते हैं।

SHRI S.R. BOMMAI: Sir, at the outset, I welcome the thinking of the Government to have a National Child Commission. After the announcement made by the hon. Minister and the hon. Prime Minister, it was widely reported in all the national newspapers, and editorials also had been written. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister an article which appeared in the "Indian Express" of 15th November, 1998. It was stated: "Responding to the suggestion of the National Bal Bhawan vice-chairperson, Swaraj Lamba, Joshi said that the Commission would go into all aspects of children like health, education and their rights and exploitation. A Bill to this effect was expected to come up in the coming Parliament session."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Comprehensive Consumer Policy

*63. SHRI S.M. KRISHNA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that there have been a number of instances of cheating of consumers in the country last year, prominent amongst them being the oil dropsy incidents; if so, whether Government propose to introduce any comprehensive consumer policy to arrest such incidents and ensure consumers' rights; and

(b) whether Government have received suggestions on the need for an indepedent Commission on Food, Drug and Product Safety, if so, the details thereof, including action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Government have specific information only about the dropsy incidents where adulteration of Edible Oils was suspected to be the cause. For ensuring safe and quality Edible Oils consumers, Government have promulgated the Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998 under the Essential Commodiites Act, 1955.

For general consumer protection, the Consumer Promotion Act, 1986 already exists which enshrines the rights of consumers against being cheated through various malpractices and provides remedies for their violations.

(b) The Government of NCT of Delhi had suggested the establishment of National Food Safety Council under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The proposal is under examination by the Ministry of Health.

Export of Onions

*66. MISS MABEL REBELLO:
SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to lift ban on the export of onion;

(b) if so, whether Government have ensured the stock of onion for domestic consumption; and

(c) what is the storage capacity and the stock available with Government?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) and (b) The ban on export of onion was partially lifted on 21.1.99 by allowing export of Bangalore Rose onion and Krishnapuram onion as well as export of 3000 MTs of onion to Sri Lanka on a Government to Government basis. Subsequently, Government on 9.2.99 decided to permit the export of 25,000 MTs of onion per month for the next three months through the agencies to be designated by the Government of Maharashtra or by the Associate Shippers registered with the designated agencies. The lifting of ban on export of onion, subject to a quantitative ceiling, is to ensure that onion growers get remunerative prices for their produce and also to prevent export of large quantities, so as to keep the prices and availability at resonable levels in the country.

(c) Onion, being a perishable commodity, is not generally stored in cold storages due to its low humidity requirement and pungent smell. Only the onions of rabi crop, which are harvested in summer season, are stored in coventional mehtods by farmers. The kharif and late kharif onions contain high percentage of moisture and are not suitable for storage. The kharif and late kharif and are not suitable for storage. The kharif and late kharif onions are sold by the farmers at the earliest in the market. The Govenrment is not maintaining any stock of onions.

Extension of Rail Line at Kumarghat-Agartala Sector

*67. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work on extension of rail line at Kumarghat-Agartala sector is proceeding as per schedule;

(b) whether sufficient budgetary provision has been made so that the work is not delayed; and

(c) whether there is a proposal to convert the metre-guage line between Lumding and Kumarghat into broad-gauge?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Initially there were delays due to land acquisition but now the work is proceeding as per schedule.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir. The conversion of MG line from Lumbding to Badarpur is already in progress and further survey from Badarpur to Kumarghat has also been taken up.

सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली की मध्यावधि समीक्षा

*68. **श्री ईशदत्त यादव:**
चौधरी हरमोहन सिंह यादव:

क्या खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली की कोई मध्यावधि समीक्षा की थी;